

Springfield Township High School Library Annual Report—June 2007

Highlights of 2006 / 2007

- Integration of Web 2.0 tools into curriculum
- Introduction of new online tools: JSTOR, EBSCO's Literary Reference Center, NoodleBib's Notecards, and Gale e-book reference tools
- Collaboration in Classrooms for the Future Grant project
- Shifting of website to school server
- Addition of streamed learning objects to library website
- Addition of two galleries to the website

For the second year we collaborated with teachers to introduce new curricular strategies, incorporating new Web-based communication tools. I worked with several teachers to explore uses of blogs and wikis and other Web-based communications tools in classroom for projects that involved writing, journaling, reflection, and collaboration.

Dan Meder's video production classes worked with me to develop short video lessons on our school's perennial grammar issues. This year's Classrooms for the Future (CFF) grant brought a wealth of resources to our school. It also brought a new partner, Ken Rodoff, with whom I can now seriously explore and scale out meaningful integration of technologies.

Our library continues to be a dynamic place for students to investigate, work, and create. During a single block you will see students working in groups or independently, as they: create instructional videos, produce podcasts, search scholarly journal databases or databases of streamed media, present using our SmartBoard, write posts in curricular blogs, collaborate on wikis. You will also see our students reading books and magazines.



Presenting with the Smartboard

Curriculum Highlights



Sample READ
Posters



Author Chris
Crutcher visits via
teleconference



Girls discover new
books for their
environmental debate!

I work closely with nearly all of our students, introducing them to a wide scope of resources for their individual projects. Among the many ongoing projects are the 8th grade persuasive essay, the 8th grade comparison project on World War II aircraft, the 9th grade formal research paper on the Elizabethan period, the 10th and 11th grade research papers and projects on American history and literary criticism (with new poetry components this year), the 11th grade American Dream paper, and a wide variety of 12th grade global studies investigations. All of these projects are question and thesis driven.

In addition to the ongoing projects and traditional papers, we continue to experiment with and guide new instructional strategies. Last year I introduced blogs as tools for student discussion, writing and research. Ken Rodoff and I integrated many of these new strategies early in the fall semester. We used wikis to help groups create "Live from Salem" podcasts as his class read *The Crucible*. Ken and I piloted a new blogging strategy with his seniors. Each student selected a major character from *Hamlet* and journaled that character's experiences, scene-by-scene, as they responded to three other characters in small "Hamlet communities." Ken acted as the pedantic Polonius.

I helped Jen McCaslin set up blogs for her literature circles, and helped Jeff McFarland create a blog discussion space for Global Studies. Kevin Martin and I experimented with research blogs for his Senior Seminar class. We will be rolling this out with more seniors next year. Andrew Marcinek and I explored the use of Flickr for reinforcing vocabulary. I introduced NoodleTools' new electronic notecard system to several classes and will be further promoting its use next year. Students saw its value immediately, preferring its flexibility, and grouping capabilities to the index card approach.

Last spring I worked with Sue Carabba on developing research, library and technology components for the new Ramp Up program. We implemented these lessons in the fall semester. I enjoyed having the opportunity to introduce these transfer-in students to new resources, research strategies, and technologies. Because we developed relationships early in the school year, I was able to informally monitor these students' needs and progress well after the course ended.

We explored further curricular use of student-produced video, adding a great deal of content to the collection of learning objects we began last year. These short videos are designed to address specific learning needs. Dan Meder and I worked with classes during both semesters to create videos addressing students' most common errors in grammar. We now have an archive of 12 grammar videos to serve our learning community. One of my favorites this year concerned the disease *Prepositionitis*. These instructional videos, as well as some new instructional podcasts, are now collected in our SpringfieldVideoBlog (<http://springfieldvideo.edublogs.org/>). Through the course of the year I guided many students in the creation of videos for class projects using iMovie. Students helped me create Flickr image galleries. Chris Brennan helped launch our online Art Gallery. Steve Greco helped launch our Springfield Clipart Gallery, which visually chronicles Springfield life.

Two plagiarism incidents required convening the Academic Standards Committee. Both of the teachers involved experienced successful outcomes, and it appeared that the students involved learned from their experiences. It also appears that Turnitin.com is a useful tool.

We continued 8th grade orientations, touring students through the library's on- and off-line resources with an orientation scavenger hunt and follow-up practice relating to the Middle Ages. Ben Fallon, an independent study student, created a new orientation video for the 2007/2008 school year.

We participated in two Internet2 teleconference events this year. Our Banned Books Week discussion on September 25th brought noted young adult authors Chris Crutcher and Sonia Sones into our library. Another event, for music students, featured African drumming techniques. We also used our teleconference equipment to host a CFF meeting and meetings for guidance counselors.

I helped to plan a full-day fall technology and research inservice for new teachers and presented end-year technology inservices with Ken Rodoff on Web 2.0 tools.

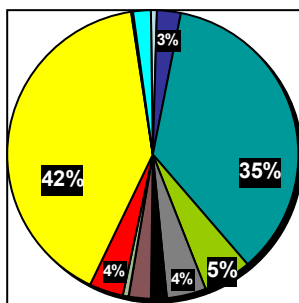
Class Visits and Usage Patterns

1488 classes visited our library this school year. This decrease from last year's 1840 visits may reflect increased use of the school's COWs (computers on wheels) and the addition of COWs from the Classrooms for the Future grant at the end of the year. It may also reflect some unofficial lost time due to our school's December tragedy. It is important to note that despite the decrease, the library was heavily booked and that students using computers outside of the library continue to use library services through the Virtual Library and through the carts of materials we often deliver to classrooms. The heaviest use came from Social Studies (42%) and English (35%) classes. October, March, and May were again the months of heaviest use. During October, our busiest month, we saw 209 visiting classes. (A statistical summary of class visits is appended.)

Wednesday night usage was slightly down, but nevertheless lively, especially during the months of November, January, and May. During evening hours students take advantage of Honor Society tutoring, work in small groups on research projects, and use technology applications they may not have at home.

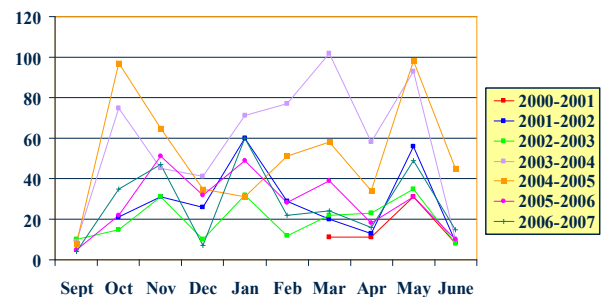
Webpage statistics demonstrate extremely heavy and increasing use of our online resources. (See statistics below.) Our site hosts 722 visitors per day, up from 638 visitors, or 9%, since last year. We average 5049 visitors per week, up from 4733 last year. (Our high number of 1784 visitors occurred on the day of our school's tragedy, December 12th.) Tuesday is the day of heaviest online use. October is the month of heaviest online use. Students use our website even when they are not at school. Approximately 19% of use occurs on Saturdays and Sundays. Nearly 60% of our usage occurs before or after school hours. And it seems that not all of our users are our own students. Statistics reveal that our site is used all over the world, especially in Canada, the U.K., and Australia.

Class Visits by Content Area



- Art
- Music
- English
- Language
- SpecEd/ELL
- Health
- TechEd
- Math
- Science
- SocialStudies

Library Evening Usage



Website Use

Summary of Site Usage		Period: 901 Days Tracked	
Daily Unique:		Totals:	
Today	121 / 01 Jun, Fri, 2007	Unique Visitors	651337 - 50.24%
Yesterday	793 / 31 May, Thu, 2007	Visits incl. Reloads	1296474
Average	722 Visitors per Day	Reloads	645137 - 49.76%
Highest Day	1784 / 12 Dec, Tue, 2006	Visitors via Referrers	477765 - 73.35%
Weekly Unique:		Website Referrers	8650
Current Week	3429 / Wk 22	Javascript Enabled	631022 - 96.88%
Last Week	5341 / Wk 21		
Average	5049 Visitors per Week	Most accessed:	
Highest Week	8306 / Wk 17	Browser	MSIE 6 - 67.26%
Monthly Unique:		Operating System	Windows XP - 78.05%
Current Month	121 / Jun	Screen Resolution	1024x768 - 57.71%
Last Month	26759 / May	Screen Color	32 Bit (16.7M) - 81.35%
Average	21010 Visitors per Month	Searchengine	Google - 40.41%
Highest Month	32530 / Oct	Keyword	mja - 6.67%
Highest Hour of the Day	13:00 - 13:59 - 6.59%	Country	United States - 83.55%
Highest Day of the Week	Tuesday - 17.82%	Continent	North America - 88.73%

About the collection

We now offer students and faculty 30,805 items, an increase of 1,015 items since June 2006.

The collection continues to expand in multiple directions. We offer two streaming media subscription services--Safari Montage which offers many of the popular Schlessinger series, and United Streaming, which is funded by our MCIU membership. Our Streaming Video Pathfinder expands these media resources by including links to free streaming video portals. We purchase DVDs as replacements for the aging VHS format and we are expanding our online reference collection in the form of e-books. Our presentation area now features a SmartBoard for instruction and presentation.

Our efforts serving as headquarters for the Pennsylvania Young Adult Top Forty Committee resulted in new materials totaling \$38,360 this year. This source of gift books allows us to focus spending on other areas of critical need. This year we focused again on the heavily used literary criticism collection and supporting our growing electronic collections.

We added several popular titles--*Novels for Students*, *Poetry for Students*, *Nonfiction Classics for Students*, and *Science and its Times*--as e-books, dramatically increasing the potential for simultaneous student use. At the end of March we added the scholarly database JSTOR. The response from our honors English and History students was astounding. Students were similarly excited about EBSCO's Literary Reference Center, which greatly increased access to criticism. Our students respond to databases as if they were music fans responding to the release of a new CD. Students and teachers, as well as alumni, comment about the depth of our collection in comparison to other libraries they visit.

At the end of the year, PTA and James Leber funds allowed us to purchase a core collection of Playaways, individual audiobooks that resemble iPods. We will promote these titles at the beginning of the next school year.

Once again students explored and exploited the collections of public and university libraries through interlibrary loan. At the beginning of their Senior Seminar classes, we introduced seniors to the ACCESS PA databases. This year we received 167 items from other participating ACCESS PA libraries, exceeding last year's record 148 loans, which was 21 items more than the previous year. The range of topics included: cake decorating, puppetry, Irish and Indian dancing, wine, arts management, sports journalism, and network security. Students were again delighted to see the wealth of free materials arrive on these rather esoteric topics.

Circulation statistics ranged between 325 and 665 books per month with September, October, and March being the months of highest activity. We circulated 3921 items this year. The numbers for heaviest areas of use are nearly identical to last year, with the highest circulation in the following areas: fiction (nearly double any other classification), American and world history, literary criticism, social issues, and the arts. (See appended statistical reports.)

Library activity and student reading are no longer adequately measured by traditional circulation statistics. The charts below represent other elements of student reading--both at school and at home--for two of our subscription database suites. With a growing collection of e-books, reference titles, and online databases, students often download or print content they read. Looking more closely usage of the Gale database suite, the Opposing Viewpoints, Biography and Literature Resource Centers are the most heavily used. ProQuest Statistics reveal similarly heavy student usage, and an especially impressive number of students searching Historical Newspapers, with its access to three centuries of contemporaneous reporting.

ProQuest Product Use: Jun 2006 to May 2007

Database	# Full-text Sessions	# Searches
elibrary Curriculum (from school)	2674	2319
elibrary Curriculum (remote)	1041	1125
Historical Newspapers (from school)	2703	5096
Historical Newspapers (remote)	1898	1753
SIRS Knowledge Source (total)	2726	5043
Grand Total	11042	15336

GALENET MONTHLY USAGE SUMMARY: April 2007

	Inside Usage	Remote Usage	Total Usage
Total Sessions	1555	169	1724
Total Connect Time (min)	13154	1332	14486
Average Session Time (min)	8	8	8
Total Fulltext	2015	214	2229
Total Retrievals	2890	273	3163
Total Searches	9891	1058	10877

About service

Our regular Current Awareness Service, run by Michele Kennedy, allows teachers to keep up in their fields, with quick access to tables of contents from their favorite journals. It is also a full-text copying service for those articles teachers find most intriguing.

For the first full year, our Weekly Calendar resides on our website. The calendar is a reminder of sign-up times and provides teachers who might like to visit, notice of open spots. The procedure cuts down on “no-shows” and helps to maximize usage. The materials suggestion form, added to the website this past year, allows for automatic requests and offers some ideas of holes in our collection.

Our two Apple computers are now frequently used for movie and poster production. Our poster printer produced a variety of sports and club READ posters. Teachers and students continue to make regular heavy use of our digital cameras and scanners. We had to update two of our cameras this year to meet demand.

Though we produced only two library newsletters this year, *much* additional library communication—announcing new products, resources and services--occurred through regular emails targeted at specific departments or groups of teachers. At the end of the year, we converted the prerequisite reading list to wiki format to incorporate teacher guides and other materials and to encourage collaboration. We also introduced Springfield2.0 Ning as a tool for faculty collaboration.

Listening to Learners

We ran out of time before we could produce video exit interviews this year. Instead, in April, I asked a few groups of students to reflect on their use of Web 2.0 in their classes. These videos reveal a new sense of engagement for translated projects. Students discussed how much they enjoyed online dialog and writing on book discussion or literature circle blogs. They spoke of taking care to improve their writing because they knew they had an audience. They spoke of better retention of vocabulary when they podcast vocabulary words and dramatically demonstrated word usage in audio files. Students also described the changes that occurred when we asked them to rethink PowerPoint--to consider it from the perspective of the audience. We knew we made some impact when one senior explained, “the slides are not for us; they are for the audience.”

Students continue to informally express appreciation for the resources of the Virtual Library. Despite the universal reliance on Wikipedia and Google, many of *our* students describe databases as the best starting point for research. Nevertheless, students will use the sources their teachers expect them to use. When teachers expect students to use scholarly materials, students generally rise to the occasion. Though Wikipedia is often a good place to start, I would like to see all of our students explore a toolkit of many other resources. I need to work over the coming year to ensure that all students are using appropriate, quality materials for their research inquiries.

Students continue to rely on our Pathfinders for major projects. I am beginning to convert these resource guides to wiki format to facilitate collaboration and to simplify the updating process. Students are responding well to NoodleBib, choosing to use the electronic citation generator and notetaking tool even when it is not specifically assigned. When I ask students about their favorite databases, over and over again they point to the new JSTOR, to Opposing Viewpoints, Literature Resource Center, and to eLibrary.

In response to the slow load time of the main page and the growing media collection on our Virtual Library, John Schultz and Tim Coughlin helped me move the Virtual Library from the MCIU server to the district server. This dramatically improved download speed and eliminated student frustration. They noted the immediate improvements.

On December 12th our school experienced the tragedy of Shane Halligan’s suicide. Our staff, and the teachers with us, did all that was in our power to shield students (both physically and visually) from the events transpiring outside our front doors. Nevertheless, for the first couple of months following the event, some students had trouble re-entering the place where they experienced one of the greatest traumas of their young lives. Our facility slowly returned to normal. Everyone eventually came back. We continue to feel special bonds with many of the students who were with us that morning.

Staff and Hours

Casey Arlen joined our staff this year when JoAnn Supplee accepted a position at Germantown Academy. Casey's experience in the school community helped us make a very smooth transition. Michele Kennedy and Casey Arlen are both devoted to helping our students. Our library's success is, in large part, dependent on their efforts.

Though we keep no statistics on this use, our staff has noticed that after school hours were busier than ever. “Regulars” also continue to appreciate the extra opportunity to use library resources on Wednesday nights, especially during peak project periods. National Honor Society students volunteer to tutor students who sign up for Wednesday night sessions. This service is especially important to students without technology at home. Thanks to Casey Arlen for her Wednesday night library coverage!

Additional Activities

Bulletin boards this year included: motivating words from new teachers, club and team READ posters, love stories, March Madness, senior plans, and teachers' and students' prom photos.

Despite a very late start, Mark Kobasz and I finally got the panels for our library art gallery installed. The gallery, which features a beautiful mosaic sign created by senior Laura Standley, celebrates the work of student artists. Materials for the gallery project were funded by a memorial gift from Andrew W. Hills. We hope to host our first formal openings in the fall in combination with Student Council coffeehouse events. Art classes continue to beautify the library with their rotating exhibits.



Book posters

The Community and Beyond

We hosted several teams of visiting educators. They included visitors from Phoenixville and Germantown High Schools. In April, we hosted the national conference of Independent School Librarians (more than 200 visitors). I used Skype to present to a group of pre-service librarians in Norway. In March, I served as an online guest lecturer at Florida State University's graduate library school program. In November, middle school librarian Ro Becker and I hosted an introduction to our libraries for the PTA. Using the SmartBoard, we presented our content interactively with a Library Jeopardy game.



Flickr vocabulary

Pennsylvania's Deputy Secretary of Education for Information and Educational Technology, Michael Golden visited the library last fall and spent an hour with me discussing the potential role of the school librarian in the CFF program.

Our work in technology connects us with faculty from local universities. Temple University professor Renee Hobbs and her doctoral students continued to visit. This year I worked with Dr. Hobbs on a research project related to youth and copyright issues.

Professional Accomplishments

This year I completed my Ph.D. program at the University of North Texas, a fully-funded IMLS grant. I defended my dissertation successfully on May 7th. I am grateful to the District and to Joe Roy for supporting my participation in this program. My preliminary study was published in the second edition of *Youth Information Seeking Behavior*, by Mary K. Chelton and Colleen Cool in January. The study explores exemplary practice in school library websites.



From the
Prepositionitis
video

Presentations

I presented at several national conferences: the American Library Association, Alan November's Building Learning Communities, the *School Library Journal* Summit, the American Association of Library and Information Science Educators, and Computers in Libraries. I presented at two state conferences: the Ohio Educational Library Media Association and the Pennsylvania School Librarians' Association. At the Pennsylvania conference, Ken Rodoff and I shared our collaborative efforts relating to Classrooms for the Future as a model for other schools. I guest lectured (via technology) for graduate classes at Simmons College and at Florida State University.

This summer I will present at the national NECC conference in Atlanta, Building Learning Communities, and the Alaska State School Librarians Association. Among my presentations will be two workshops with Ken Rodoff.

Committees:

I served on AASL's committee to rewrite the national guidelines for library programs. I continued to co-chair the Media Selection and Review for the Pennsylvania Association of School Librarians. *Participation on this committee resulted this year in \$38,360 worth of materials for our school library.* I participate as an officer of ISTE's SIG (special interest group) for librarians.

In the district, I co-chaired the Senior Awards Committee, participated on the high school Planning Team, the District's Technology Council, and the advisory committee for selection of the new principal. I am a member of the MCIU's Tech Advisory Board.

Publications:

My NeverEndingSearch blog, (reflections about information literacy and 21st century learning) will be among the featured blogs hosted by *School Library Journal* beginning in June. My blogging experience has connected me with educators all over the world and helped me better understand curricular opportunities for emerging information and communication tools.

Over the school year I published the following:

"Information fluency meets Web 2.0." For Freedman, T. *Coming of Age*, 2nd ed. (Upcoming e-book.)

"It'd be really dumb not to use it. Virtual libraries: Their influence on high school students' information seeking and use." Chapter in Mary K. Chelton and Colleen Cool. (Eds.) *Youth Information Seeking Behavior*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow.

"Open the Door. Let 'em In." eVOYA, April 2007, 1-3.

http://pdfs.voya.com/VOYA2/VOYA200704tag_team_tech.pdf

I established the TeacherLibrarianNing, an international social networking site for teacher librarians, now with more than 350 members. I created LMNET Wiki, a document annex for the popular international listserv.

Visit from Michael Golden, Deputy Secretary of Education, PA



Published chapter in this academic volume



Article on change in Virtual Libraries



Issues

Our biggest issue this year has been the continual failure of our Dell desktops. As I write this report, 17 of our workstations are unusable. We continue to wait for their parts to arrive and be replaced. This situation made it most challenging for teachers to work with whole classes in either of our two labs. Our aging color printer barely made it through the end of the school year, requiring tape and gently prodding to keep it going.

Though we devote great energy to improving research, we could certainly improve our efforts. I need to increase teacher awareness of our print and electronic resources to ensure that students move well beyond Wikipedia for their serious research. Seven years into our research initiative, many new teachers were not part of our original work and do not have equal training relating to research issues and strategies. We need to determine how best to share the knowledge with the new teachers and to consider how to update the skills of our more veteran faculty especially in the areas of new quality online resources, academic integrity, inquiry and thesis development, and synthesis skills.

Goals

This coming year I will introduce more teachers to the new features provided by NoodleTools, particularly, its new electronic note card feature.

I am eager to continue work with Ken Rodoff, our CFF coach in spreading thoughtful use of interactive Web technologies--especially wikis and blogs--in the curriculum. Our end-of-year inservice should enable us to introduce these tools to all teachers and we hope teachers might explore some of these tools over summer break. If the grant funding continues, and if more classrooms are equipped with one-to-one laptop configurations, I must reconsider strategies for moving our library program to the places where students will access it. This will mean posting more instructional content online and it will mean moving outside of the library to teach with, collaborate with, and support classroom teachers.

I hope to move many of our pathfinders to wiki format to encourage student and faculty collaboration and to facilitate easy updating.

As a logical outgrowth of our dissatisfaction with the current use of PowerPoint in the curriculum, I will continue to suggest presentation improvements and suggest digital storytelling as new strategies for student communication. These creative, media-based narrative projects should inspire more effective writing.

I will promote our new Playaway collection and work with the MCIU to explore the further addition of digital audiobook collections to support and encourage reading, especially among our more reluctant students.

I hope to explore new strategies for integrating Internet2 videoconferencing into our program. Max Malossini and I are investigating the potential for holding Academic Team practices and meets online.

I plan to explore strategies for incorporating the materials in the Clara H. Isaacman Holocaust memorial trunk across the curriculum. The trunk was donated to our school in memory of Myra and Nigel Plumridge.

Outside of the building, I will be working with my AASL committee to complete the rewrite of the national guidelines and attempt to publish my doctoral dissertation and its resulting models as articles in professional journals.

Over the course of the next year I plan to encourage more visits by the departments underrepresented in our statistics, by suggesting new ideas for projects and by sharing more about compelling curricular resources!

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Valenza